

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O People of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING 40:1-5.9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

'Console my people, console them' says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her

that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for,

that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,

every mountain and hill be laid low,

let every cliff become a plain,

and the ridges a valley;

then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it;

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain,

joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice,

joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear,

say to the towns of Judah,

'Here is your God'.

Here is the Lord coming with power,

his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him,

his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,

gathering lambs in his arms,

holding them against his breast

and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps84

Response: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

1I will hear what the Lord God has to say,

a voice that speaks of peace,

peace for his people.

His help is near for those who fear him

and his glory will dwell in our land. (R.)

2.Mercy and faithfulness have met;

justice and peace have embraced.

Faithfulness shall spring from the earth

and justice look down from heaven (R.)

3.The Lord will make us prosper

and our earth shall yield its fruit.

Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. (R.)

SECOND READING 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,
and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.**

Alleluia!

GOSPEL 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;

he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,

make his paths straight.

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings, and since we have no merits to plead our cause, come, we pray, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Replenished by the food of spiritual nourishment, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, through our partaking in this mystery, you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and hold firm to the things of heaven.

Through Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL REFLECTION



How do you tell others about what Jesus Christ means to you? What means do you find most effective in sharing your faith with another?

How can you be a faith example to others without verbally explaining your faith? Do your actions match your words when you share your faith with others?

How do family members influence each other's faith life?

Why do you think Jesus came to John to be baptised with water?

Are there other things in your life which are more important than actively seeking a better faith life?

Do you celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation often during the year? What is your understanding of the need to seek reconciliation among people of other denominations, as well as the unchurched?

What values should you be conscious of in sharing your faith with others? Do you share your faith with all – the unborn, elderly, imprisoned, the ill, the young, the poor, the lonely?

GOSPEL ACTION

Find one person this week who needs a boost in their faith life, and give them some encouragement. Ask someone whom you admire for their steady faith what it is that brings them joy.

Readings – 3rd Sunday of Advent Year B

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2.10-11

Second Reading: Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel: John 1:6-8.19-28

Homily

6th December 2020 – 2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B

Dear friends, in the First Reading we hear a message of hope and consolation addressed to the exiles in Babylon. It would appear that there was little ground for hope, however, the Prophet Isaiah assures his people that God is about to come to their aid and will lead them back to their own land in a new exodus. Even though the actual return from exile fell far short of the glowing picture painted here, Isaiah's words point the way to the messianic era.

The first reading leads us into the Gospel. John appears in the desert and announces the coming of Jesus, the Christ and Son of God, two titles with which Mark begins his Gospel. Both readings issue a call for repentance with an invitation to **“Prepare a way for the Lord.”**

The message that rings out loud and clear on this second Sunday of Advent, is heard in both the First Reading and the Gospel; **“Prepare a way for the Lord....make his paths straight...”**

Mark's gospel begins in the wilderness with a voice crying out to be heard. We are introduced to a man named John. The wild man of the desert who draws the Jewish crowds to him and challenges them. John was the last and greatest of the prophets who prepared the people for the coming of the Messiah. For a while he dominated the scene, he was the link between the Old and New, he enjoyed great popularity but was always very conscious of the fact someone greater than he was coming and his role was simply to prepare people.

When Jesus appeared John knew that his task was complete, his job was done. He didn't stand in Jesus' way, he pointed him out, acknowledging that Jesus was the one that they had been waiting for and then he stepped aside allowing Jesus to take over; once Jesus appeared John was quite happy to take a backward step.

There is something very attractive about John the Baptist, people listened to him, and subsequently changed their lives. In the midst of his eccentricity he had integrity and he spoke the truth which challenged people to repentance, to conversion and a new way of living.

On this second Sunday of Advent we too are challenged by a voice that cries in the wilderness, **“Prepare a way for the Lord, and make his paths straight...”**

As we are challenged by that wilderness voice today, how are we going to respond this Advent?”

Homily

6th December 2020 – 2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B

Last Sunday in his homily Pope Francis said that Advent is the season for 'remembering the closeness of God who came down to dwell in our midst,' and he encouraged people to pray the traditional Advent prayer, 'Come, Lord Jesus' every day. He said that Advent is both a time of 'God's closeness and our watchfulness.'

As we prepare a way for the Lord this Advent let's follow Pope Francis' advice and pray together that simple Advent prayer, **Come, Lord Jesus, come into my heart and life afresh and anew.**

With love and prayers, God bless you and your families, **Fr Phil x.**

Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion

6th December 2020 – 2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B

As we prepare a way for the Lord this Advent we offer our prayers to the Father:

For the Church and for Christians everywhere: may they prepare a way and be ready to welcome the Lord this Christmas time.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For political and community leaders; may they make wise and prudent decisions and always bear in mind the needs of those who are the poorest and most vulnerable. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all victims and survivors of abuse: may we as a Church listen attentively to them and help them find healing and peace in their lives.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are sick, especially those affected by the coronavirus; may they know the grace and healing of Jesus.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are hungry and the poor in our world; may we put our faith into action and be generous in sharing what we have with others this Advent.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For peace and an end to war, violence and hatred everywhere.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all the faithful departed especially **Mary McDonald James Rathbone, Albert Maguire** and all those who have died recently : **“Eternal rest grant upon them...”**

For those who mourn the loss of loved ones; may Christ’s message of hope in eternal life bring them comfort and consolation.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We ask Our Lady and all the Saints to join their prayers with ours as we say: **“Hail Mary...”**

God our loving Father,

We ask you to hear the prayers that we offer through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion
6th December 2020 – 2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B

Spiritual Communion

Prayer of St Alphonsus

My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and
I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.
Amen.